



**MINUTES OF
THE REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MARCH 10, 2025**

PRESENT: Andrea Smith, President
Matthew Mauer, Clerk
Alisa Lee

REMOTE: Carla Santorno

IN THE CHAIR: Andrea Smith

PLACE: Park District Headquarters, 4702 S 19th Street Tacoma, WA 98405

REGULAR MEETING

The regular meeting of the Metropolitan Park District Board of Park Commissioners was called to order at 6:00 p.m. President Smith read a land acknowledgement.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS None

PRESIDENTS REPORT

President Smith noted that she visited the Conservatory and the new playground at Ferry Park this past weekend.

STANDING COMMITTEE AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Nature & Environment Advisory Council

Commissioner Mauer reported at the next meeting is scheduled for March 25th.

Zoo Liaison Committee

Commissioner Lee noted she attend the liaison committee meeting earlier in the afternoon. Agenda items included an update on windstorm repairs at NW Trek, the newly born Tapir and upcoming bear camp.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Shon Sylvia commented on the following:

- Work continues at Northwest Trek Wildlife Park, for the emergency repair declaration from windstorms last month.
- Contractor reached substantial completion at Ferry Park. Construction fencing was removed on Friday to provide access to the two new playgrounds this past weekend.

Staff have coordinated a celebration event with our Hilltop community members who helped engage the neighborhood in both the playground design and selection processes with festivities planned for March 29th from 10 am – noon.

- The March 24, 2025 Regular Board Meeting will take place at the Center at Norpoint.. In conjunction with the meeting, a Meet Your Park Board Welcome Reception will be held from 5-6 pm. This event aims to offer the community an opportunity to meet the Park Board Commissioners, engage in informal conversations, and share thoughts and ideas regarding the future of our parks and recreational programs. The public reception is open to all community members.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Malachi Cabera thanked the Board for the opportunity to interview for the vacant Park Board seat.

MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 24, 2025 REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Commissioner Mauer moved to adopt the minutes as presented; seconded by Commissioner Lee and passed on a vote of 4-0.

CONSENT AGENDA None

PURCHASING RESOLUTIONS None

PUBLIC WORKS PURCHASING RESOLUTIONS None

SINGLE READING RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. R11-25: AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE THE 2025 OPERATING AGREEMENT WITH THE TACOMA PARKS FOUNDATION AGREEMENT

Commissioner Mauer moved adoption of the resolution; seconded by Commissioner Lee.

Shon Sylvia noted that this resolution supports the 2025 operating agreement with the Tacoma Parks Foundation, an independent 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to fundraising for parks and recreation. Mr. Sylvia reminded the Board that this topic was previously discussed in depth at the Committee of the Whole (COW). Mr. Sylvia noted that The Tacoma Parks Foundation provides essential fundraising and development functions for parks, recreation programs, and facilities. It also supports the Seymour Botanical Conservatory Foundation and the Fort Nisqually Foundation. Mr. Sylvia further commented that that annual agreement includes a \$720,000 allowance for services like major gifts, grants, capital projects, and endowments. Mr. Sylvia further commented that The Foundation is expected to raise an amount equal to or greater than this allowance in 2025, presenting minimal risk to the agency. Additionally, \$1.165 million of

raised funds will be distributed to benefit the Eastside Community Center through its programming endowment, the Zinna Linnik Fund, and the Scott Funds via the Greater Tacoma Community Foundation.

Board Members expressed appreciation for the Tacoma Parks Foundation’s work and their partnership, acknowledging staff contributions to developing the agreement.

Being no additional comments the question was called and the resolution passed on a vote of 4-0.

RESOLUTION NO. R12-25: AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE THE 2025-2026 OPERATING AGREEMENT WITH THE ZOO SOCIETY AND THE NORTHWEST TREK FOUNDATION

Commissioner Mauer moved adoption of the resolution; seconded by Commissioner Lee.

Alan Varsik explained that the resolution, similar to a previous one, is intended to authorize the executive director to enter into agreements with two philanthropic partners, the Zoo Society and the Northwest Trek Foundation. Mr. Varsik commented that as discussed last week at the Committee of the Whole, this involves a two-year agreement with two components: an operating agreement detailing collaboration processes, and Exhibit A, which outlines financial components and mutual expectations. Mr. Varsik commented that the agreement currently projects contributions of over \$2.2 million from the Zoo Society to the Zoo and \$550,000 to Northwest Trek.

Board members expressed their appreciation to Alan Varsik, the staff, and the teams at the Zoo Society and Northwest Trek Foundation for their work and contributions. They highlighted excitement about the ongoing efforts at both locations.

Being no additional comments the question was called and the resolution passed on a vote of 4-0.

RESOLUTION NO. R13-25: SUPPORTING PROPOSITION 1, THE CITY OF TACOMA’S STREETS INITIATIVE II BALLOT MEASURE, IN THE APRIL 22, 2025 ELECTION

Commissioner Lee moved adoption of the resolution; seconded by Commissioner Mauer

Hunter George, Policy and Government Relations Officer, explained that last month, City staff and Council Member Walker & Mayor Woodards, presented on Proposition 1, also known as the Streets II Initiative, which will appear on the April 22nd special election ballot. Mr. George noted that this initiative is a renewal and extension of a program approved by Tacoma voters in 2015 and is expected to generate over \$900 million over the next 15 years for street repair, maintenance, safety improvements, and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure if approved. Mr. George continued by noting that following that presentation, the Board directed Director Sylvia to prepare a resolution supporting Proposition 1.

Board members expressed their support for the Streets Initiative, highlighting the city's successful implementation of the previous initiative and the importance of improving infrastructure near and providing safe access to parks without relying on cars. Commissioners emphasized the initiative's role in enhancing connectivity for communities on the Eastside and South End and noted their support for continuing the existing program with a small increase.

Being no additional comments the question was called and the resolution passed on a vote of 4-0.

FIRST READING RESOLUTIONS None

SECOND READINGS RESOLUTIONS None

NEW BUSINESS None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS None

EXECUTIVE SESSION EVALUATE THE QUALIFICATIONS OF CANDIDATES FOR POTENTIAL APPOINTMENT TO ELECTIVE OFFICE

In accordance with RCW 42.30.110 the Board recessed into executive session to discuss the qualifications of applicants for public employment for approximately 30 minutes.

MOTION TO NOMINATE AND DISCUSS NOMINEES FOR APPOINTMENT TO PARK BOARD POSITION #3

President Smith shared that the decision has been difficult due to the strong qualifications of all applicants, including their competencies, professional experience, leadership, and various areas of expertise such as government and public policy, parks and recreation, and conservation. After thorough consideration, President Smith proposed Pete Reyes for a Commissioner position, highlighting his involvement in the Advisory Council process and his strong community support, including his advocacy

President Smith moved to appoint Pete Reyes to vacant position #3;seconded by Commissioner Lee.

The Board members expressed strong support for Pete Reyes for the Commissioner position, highlighting his long-term involvement with the Advisory Council, his mental health expertise, and his deep knowledge of Parks Tacoma. They emphasized that while all applicants were highly qualified, Mr. Reyes' background made him uniquely suited to address the challenges Parks Tacoma will face in the coming years.

The Board also recognized the high caliber of all applicants.

Being no additional comments that question was called, and Mr. Reyes was appointed to fill position #3 on a vote of 4-0.

BOARD COMMENTS

President Smith expressed excitement about working with the new Commissioner and highlighted the privilege of reviewing 24 highly qualified applicants over the past four months. Acknowledging the difficulty of the decision, she noted that each candidate demonstrated exceptional commitment to Tacoma’s residents and would have been valuable contributors to the Board. President Smith expressed gratitude for all applicants' dedication and encouraged them to stay involved through volunteer opportunities, including advisory councils, to continue making a positive impact in the community.

ADJOURN

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

President

Clerk

Submitted by: Jennifer Bowman, Board Secretary